

Beginning and End

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Summary: Big 4 story in which Jack meets the others and knows that he will continue living without them. Pitch, of course, has to help stir Jack's fear of being abandoned. Rated T because all of my other stories are and I want to hold to tradition (plus there are some angsty/depressing vibes).

1. Beginning

****Okay so after an eternity of hiatus and lack of motivation, I finally decided to post. I can't promise I'll keep up with this too heavily, but I don't expect this to be long. I do, however expect this to branch off into another fic featuring different drabbles of the parts I skim in this one so don't worry about the blanks just yet.****

****This doesn't really need much setting up since everything is explained in the story, but I'll have a go anyway.****

****So basically, this takes place ****_**after**_**** all but RotG with the exception that, while Rapunzel finished her story, she can still use her healing 'powers' without having to cry. Hiccup made it through until just before the second movie so we are seeing the hell-a-attractive version instead of the adorably awkward alternative. Merida, like the others, is completely done with her story, though without any changes physically or otherwise. It'll be fairly obvious where Jack stands, but just to set you up, he is still alone and ghosting through his 300 years without memory or purpose. After watching a commentary thing about the character, I found out that the designers made him to be 14 in the movie (definitely hit above that mark in character appearance, but I'm not complaining) but I'm all for baby Jack and am knocking him down to 12ish because he is adorable.****

****I will warn you now that Jack is by FAR my favorite out of these characters and I'm not afraid to prove it through some serious Jack**

'wumpage' (I have no idea what that means, but I've come to associate it with whatever 'hurtJack' is).**

I hope you enjoy my new brainchild and as always:

Read. Review. Enjoy!

Watching. That was all he had done- could do â€”since his birth. Escaping village after village, town after town, city after city, full of those unaware of his existence, he could only watch as they went about their lives as if there was not a frozen child begging for someone to just _see_ him.

It wasn't their doing; he knew this. There was no point in blaming them for something that was clearly his fault. Maybe he didn't exist at all or he was a ghost. Maybe he was supposed to be doing something important and simply couldn't remember or he had done something terribly wrong and was paying the price. Whatever the reason, he had always hoped it wasn't the latter for what could he have done that was worthy of such a punishment; hardly existing in a world without a friend or family or even an acquaintance?

Every day passed with the dying hope that someday, someone, somewhere had to _see_ him. How he still held to that sliver of light within himself was a wonder to even his clouded mind, but it shone in his core however frail- always dimming with each passing day.

Keeping his thoughts as light as he could manage, he filled his time traveling. After 250 years, there was not a culture he didn't recognize, a species he hadn't discovered, a language he didn't know, a friend to greet each morning. Everywhere he went, despite his inward scolding not to hold out on hope, he felt the light inside of him get crushed as more and more humans passed through him with nothing more than a slight shiver.

Each one was like a brand being seared onto his heart- if he still had one, of course. He could remember the feeling and face of every human who came too close. Eventually, he went out of his way to ensure it would never happen again. If the world wanted a phantom, that's what he would become if for nothing more than to avoid the pain the mortal's ignorance scarred onto him.

Forever the child, this avoidance soon became a game of sorts. He would dance himself around a crowd of humans as they raced about their lives. Winning the game was a hollow victory, but the pain of losing far outweighed the temptation to give up.

Another game he had come to enjoy was far more common among the children of one small town in particular. Burgess, Michigan held a strange- yet understandable â€”part of the eternal boy as it was the host of his beginning on a small pond within the grasp of a thick forest bordering the small civilization. Time had changed the houses and people, but nothing could rid the spark of happiness within the children's eyes when a thick blanket of snow began to drift from the graying sky; perfect, packable snow ideal for the random snowball fights that cropped up wherever they deemed fit. Even the adults couldn't say how these games began or where the perfectly crafted snowballs appearing on the ground came from as their children were pulled into the battle of shrieking laughter.

The frozen child joined in the fun as he gracefully wove between the excited bundles of happiness scooping up his own ammunition and creating more for them when their own supply ran low. Flying around above wool-covered heads, the boy could always find a smile gracing his pale lips while the children darted to and fro, casting their own attacks while avoiding the retaliation. Never missing his target, the instigator would always join in when the balance of skill was off, but he didn't necessarily need a reason.

Of course, all good things must end for the lonely boy as he was left behind on the disturbed snow, watching yet again as his playmates were lead into warm homes with the promise of blankets and steaming broth by the fire. He could only wonder if he had ever been blessed with something so simple and what he had done to lose it.

All of the joy gained from his fun and games bled away as the pain of loneliness set in. One last glance at the moon, his silent overseer, and he was gone with a silent flurry of snowflakes dancing in his wake.

Traveling had been very educating the young boy as he was made aware of several other groups of people and creature he had never seen.

Overseas lay a village known for harsh climates and tough Vikings made so by the dwindling number of dragons attacking their homes at night. The eternal boy could attest to how fewer dragons there were than in the years past, but only one other held the sentiment. It was a small, outcaste boy who- much to the winter child's surprise â€"befriended a downed-by-him dragon and led his village into a new age. He mourned with the dragon at the loss of his tail as he soon after did with the boy at the loss of his leg. He had assisted as best he could by thickening the dense clouds to hide the dragon and his rider from the queen as well as coat the two in a thick layer of ice as they were engulfed by flames in hope of protecting them. He didn't necessarily fail, but couldn't help but feel the weight of the poetic irony infused with the injury shared between dragon and rider.

Reaching only a bit further around the globe, lay another village full of Viking-like humans with who lived a lively girl with a fiery temper to match her unkempt mass of red hair. He watched and understood her reluctance to follow the orders given her, but could not stay his vain attempt to warn her away from the potion the magician offered her. She did not listen as she could not hear him and went about her merry way, facing the challenge of her changed mother and fighting to right the wrong she had done. The boy did all he could to slow the malevolent monster that was preventing the mother and daughter from reuniting, but there was little he could do aside from what he already had- beating the beast back with his staff until the princess managed to get far enough away. It wasn't much, but it was enough so that she could fight back. The bond created between the queen and princess had been significantly strengthened by the ordeal, not to say they suddenly agreed on their viewpoints as they were both bullheadedly stubborn, but they shared a common ground now that they hadn't before and that steadied them both.

On the same side of the world, he watched a healing flower bring a child-princess into a cruel world that ripped her away from her parents not even a year later by an evil witch who cared only for her

beauty. He was only a spectator as she grew, unaware of the wrongness dealt to her, loving the witch as if she were the mother who tirelessly searched for her missing child. Try as he might, he could not warn the girl of her plight, but remained unseen as the girl's curiosity won over her fear leading her to follow the lead of a thief and a guard's horse. Laughing as she brought a song into a bar of criminals and crying out in worry as she was chained by the very woman she had once called mother, he watched. Needless to say, he helped in any way he could. Freezing the ropes that held her, he used his staff to set the girl free, but he could only watch as she held the dying thief in her arms, crying as her once-powerful hair lay useless around her. The joy he felt burst within him when the changed man was healed was nothing more than temporary as he soon thrust back into his empty world of solitude.

He envied the lives of these three the most.

What would it be like to be in such an adventure, with an unknown, unseen protector keeping watch as you fought for your beliefs? He could only imagine the satisfying feeling brought on by the victory each of them achieved. How proud they must be of themselves.

He envied them and their pride; their purpose for he had yet to find his own.

As different as each of these humans were from those the unseen child had been witness to, he had a sliver of hope that maybe one of them would have the open mindedness to finally see him. Though he tried to keep what little hope he retained safe, there was no stopping the shattering feeling of each one of them passing through him.

Maybe he really didn't exist at all.

When not instigating snowball fights in Burgess, the winter boy found himself keeping close tabs on his 'favorite three' as they were close enough to each other that he could visit all of them within the same stretch of time. He watched the Viking boy grow little-by-little until he was well over his own height and several years ahead. The fiery redhead grew closer to her mother, more annoyed with her amusing little brothers, and older as well, though she was only a few years behind the Viking. The flower princess was the closest in age to their protector, but she still surpassed his young age as he watched her spend every waking moment with her family to make up for lost time.

More envy welled up within him as he was left to silently wonder what he had done that was so wrong as to rob him of what they had; a family, a life, a friend.

Another unanswered glance at the moon did nothing more than cloud his eyes further.

Maybe he didn't deserve it.

This thought was soon-after chased away by the sound of deep chuckling from behind him. This made no sense as it was well past midnight and too cold for anyone to justify a walk through the abandoned stretch of the Arctic 'wasteland'. Turning slowly, afraid to have his hopes cast away yet again, the child faced the being behind him.

They both stood silently for a time. Of course, the boy had no reason to speak as he was only meant to listen; to watch as the world went on without him.

Another chuckle caused him to tilt his head slightly. What was so funny? What was this stranger laughing at? The questions as to why he was here and how he got there didn't seem to matter to the boy as his hopes would only cling to the possibility and be left bare to the cruel world around him.

Eventually, the eternal child couldn't bear to be patient long enough for this silent stranger to speak. Though the man was looking directly into his eyes, causing them to cast themselves away from that intense gaze, the boy called to the wind and let it lift him off the ground. Just before he disappeared, the strangest of sensations wrapped about his thin wrist.

His breath caught in his throat.

The man had-was touching him. He was able to touch him- to _see_ him. He fought against the torrent of tears that threatened to pour down his face as he gently landed back onto the welcoming snow. The feeling of touch, while overwhelmingly amazing, was quickly becoming too much for the starved child. Tugging carefully, it was soon found that he was not getting his hand back from the man until he wanted to let go.

Wait. If the man could touch him and _see_ him—could he—?

It was almost too much to ask, but the hope was too blindingly in charge of his mind to let the thought go without trying.

"Hello?" His voice was small, weak from disuse, but the message was clear.

Time slowed to a stop as the child held his breath as to not miss the answer, but none came and the light behind the boy's eyes was dimming with each passing moment. He was a breath away from giving up; of crumbling into a puddle of self-loathing and confusion before there was an answer.

"Hello, child," the dark stranger said in a voice of pure satin. Malicious intent rolled off the man in waves, but the pure joy within the boy blinded him to any warning his sub-conscious could come up with as questions burst from his mouth.

"Hi! You can see me! You're the first person who can! Do you know why? Did I do something wrong? Why doesn't the Moon talk to me anymore? How come I can make ice and snow and frost? Are we the only two like this? Can they see you? What's your name? Do you have—"

"Hush."

It was just one word, but with it, much of the boy's excitement vanished in the place of sadness. Maybe his initial excitement was too much. Maybe this man just had a quick question and would leave. Maybe the only person who could see him didn't want to talk to him.

"What is your name?"

The boy made sure to take a deep breath before answering. "I'm Jack Frost."

"Did Manny tell you this?"

Who? He wondered, but decided it was best to answer the man as well as he could. "I don't know who that is, but the Moon told me after I woke up," he explained simply, resisting the urge to spill every exciting moment of his birth before the overwhelming depression that set in soon after.

The man paused long enough for the boy to fear he had angered him and that he would leave, but the stranger only chuckled a bit. "I will not leave yet, do not fear."

Jack blinked. _How had he known? Maybe that was the man's power as ice was his. Maybe he could read minds. No, that didn't make sense. If the man could read minds, he would have known his name before asking. 'Don't fear' he had said. Maybe that was it; maybe the man could read fears like the Night Shade he had heard the Vikings tell their children about or the Boogeyman the Burgess kids hid from._ "Are you the Boogeyman?" he asked tactlessly. He was a child after all.

Now it was the man's turn to blink, but he seemed to be a bit more surprised. "Very clever, child. How do you know of me?"

"I have heard people talk about a 'Boogeyman' that knows their fears and you knew what I was afraid of without me saying so," Jack explained proudly around his large smile. He'd never been complimented before.

"Well done, Jackson. Yes, some have created that name for me; though I prefer Pitch Black as that is the name I was given."

Nodding excitedly, the winter child could hardly restrain his desire to pelt the man with questions. With the barest of nods, the man accepted the silent request.

It was not a challenge to choose his first inquiry. "Why can no one see me?"

Pitch's black eyes narrowed slightly. "Did the Moon not explain this to you?"

Jack shook his head hard enough for his white hair to cast about his face. "He only told me my name and that was over 250 years ago. I keep trying to talk to him, but he doesn't answer me. Did I do something wrong?"

His insecurities were cropping up within his core despite his attempts to ward them off. Of course, it was pointless to try seeing as the man could read his fears as easily as he could lay frost on a window. Pitch probably knew of all of his fears by now.

Those eyes narrowed even more. "That was foolish of him." A feral grin fell upon his lips. "To leave you unknowing just makes it far

easier for someone else to educate you, my dear Jackson."

His shoulders fell as his core lit up in fear. No doubt the man could sense it, but it didn't matter. Blue eyes only took a moment to look pleadingly into the dangerous gold depths before realizing what was happening. He made quick work of freezing Pitch's hand and breaking away.

Not without his heart breaking too.

He had heard stories of this man; how he was the embodiment of all of the fear and evil in the world, but he had hoped. It was this hope that was going to get him into trouble and this hope that was breaking with each moment of understanding. How that sliver of light had held on, he didn't know. What he did know was that it only took one man to shatter it completely.

The only being on the planet who can touch him, hear him, see him wished him harm.

Always the eternal child, Jack couldn't understand why the world would be so cruel; even after all of the wrong he had witnessed.

It hurt.

No matter how much distance he placed between them, the pain remained the same.

He didn't even bother glancing up at the Moon. There was no point. It wasn't going to answer. Neither was anyone else.

On the other edge of the world, long ears fell as the Spirit of Hope grasped at his chest in pain.

Someone lost their light. Someone needed him.

But who?

2. Defender

Distracting himself from the emptiness within him wasn't easy.

His dark thoughts now had a voice; a name. He could almost hear the shade's velvet tone highlighting his flaws, his deepest regrets and insecurities. 'Oh, Jackson,' it would purr, 'look at the mess you've made'.

Snowball fight after snowball fight he instigated, but he couldn't forget the feeling of that warm hand wrapped around his cold wrist.

None of the human activities he had previously enjoyed watching could erase the memory of speaking to someone for the first time.

Even the adventures of his 'favorite three' failed to ease the loss he felt aching within him, but they had come the closest.

They had found each other as fate would have it. Something- Jack later found out through eves dropping that it was pure coincidence

â€"brought them together and they became fast friends. Humans and their ability to create relationships so easily always pulled at the child's jealousy. What was he doing so wrong that, not only could he not make his own friends, but they couldn't even _see_ him to begin with?

Eyes clouding with envy, he watched from an overhanging tree branch while the three humans settled around a fire as night set in and traded tales of their trials. The Viking's dragon seemed restless throughout the conversation, but Jack paid him only half a mind in favor of listening to their retellings as if he hadn't been there to see them himself; he always loved to hear stories.

LINE

"-if not for him, I probably wouldn't have survived. Of course, he had to settle the score- 'only saving most of me' â€"but at least we're even now, right bud?" Hiccup chuckled good-naturedly as he nudged the large dragon's side. There wasn't much of an answer from the fidgeting Night Fury as his narrowed eyes searched their surroundings. "Toothless?"

The dragon gave a warble in response, not sure if his instincts were off or if there really was a threat hiding out in the shadows.

Rapunzel shuddered uncomfortably at the sudden chill in their air. "I think something might be wrong," she admitted nervously when her new friends looked confused.

Silence fell upon the small group as they cast glances around the clearing they had found. Come to think of it, it did feel as if they were being watched. A strange breath of air shifted the fire's shadows into monstrous shapes that sent the three humans to their feet and readying for a fight. Merida loaded an arrow into her now equip bow, Rapunzel lifted her frying pan in both hands as if to swing it, and Hiccup drew his sword from the sheath and ignited the blade with fire.

LINE

From just above the tense humans, their unknown protector- also sensing the impending danger â€"tightened his grip on the crooked staff at his side. Without so much as a blink, rose to crouch on the branch and whispered for the wind to be ready.

LINE

No more than a minute later, Toothless' gaze snapped to a particularly dense shadow and began to growl in warning. The group of humans followed his lead and pointed their weapons at the yet-to-be-revealed threat. Everything was still for several moments before a sinister chuckle filled the air. The shadow stepped forth.

LINE

The eternal child drew in a sharp breath at the figure's appearance.

Noâ€|

His nightmare had come to rid him of the only light he had left.

LINE

"Who're ye'?" Merida demanded, thick accent overlaying her unease at the sight of this man.

His skin was a sickly grey and all but blended into the black robe he wore that seemed to connect him to the shadows dancing behind his back. Murky, gold eyes revealed nothing more than the blank expression regarding the group before him. That is, of course, until a feral grin spread across his face, lifting his lips to show off pointed, yellowed teeth.

Rapunzel could not hold back her gasp at the fear this man was pulling from them. Surely he couldn't be human. "_What_ are you?"

Another chuckle oozed around the clearing. "That is a better question."

His voice sent chills through the group.

"Are ye' goin' ta answer er not?"

"Very well," the slimy voice relented, eyeing each of them closely, "My name is Pitch Black; the King of Nightmares." With his words, the shadows around the edges of the clearing began to take shape into vicious-looking horses. They began to crowd the trees, cutting off any and all escape routes. Toothless lowered himself to the ground threateningly as he caught sight of the beasts shifting about the treetops to prevent them from flying.

Hiccup shifted slightly, just enough to place his empty hand on the dragon's head in a vain attempt to steady him. "What do you want?"

A glint crossed the shade's eyes as he readied himself to answer, but his words were cut off before they began.

LINE

"Leave them alone."

The order came from above and, though he could not see Pitch's face, he knew the man was smirking.

Still no answer came, but this did nothing to deter the boy.

"I will not let you hurt them, Pitch."

"What can _you_ do to stop me?"

Jack flinched at the pure poison in his voice and the sharp intent underlying the question. No, the boy was not powerless, but how could he help? He was nothing more than a nuisance; a mistake unwanted by even the one who created him. '_Oh, Jackson, you'll only make a mess of things._' The young sprite tried not to flinch.

"I will do anything."

It was not a lie. Jack would give his life protecting them. It only slightly surprised him that he was willing to go so far for a group of strangers, but something within him refused to let any harm come to them. Deep inside, Jack knew that these humans were meant for so much more than what they've already done. They would go on to do great things, even if their invisible guardian was lost before their journey truly began.

"Will you?"

LINE

Confused glances were passed back and forth between the teens as the grin fell into a smirk.

"What can you do to stop me?"

First, the man toys with their nerves by hiding in the shadows, then he emerges to give them his name, only to begin talking to the air. This made no sense.

"Will you?"

Whatever conversation the man was having was not going well by the sound of it. Though, they could only hear his responses, whoever he was talking to was not winning.

Rapunzel blinked in confusion as her heart was pulled painfully as if it were a close friend being spoken to by this monster. Casting a quick look over to her companions, she found that they held the same expression she was sure shown on her own face. Something inside of her wanted nothing more than to get Pitch Black's attention off of whatever it was he was talking to.

Merida, always the impatient, beat her to it. "Hey, we're over 'ere. Don' jus' expect us ta sit quietly after a threat like that!"

It worked well enough for the man's eyes to meet hers. There was no hiding the contempt in the man's golden gaze. "Has no one taught you that it's rude to interrupt?"

"Interrupt?" Rapunzel blurted out. "We're the only ones here." Even as she said it, the smile crossing those fearsome features ignited unease within her. Was she wrong?

Hiccup came to her rescue, "Who were you talking to?" he asked conversationally.

Pitch's dark eyes rose to a low-hanging branch just above the large clearing tauntingly, but he didn't say a word.

"Alright ah've had enough of this." She hadn't even been finished talking when the archer let off an arrow towards the sinister shade.

Much to their surprise, a long shadow burst out of the forest and caught the shot before it had crossed the fire hearth. Merida blinked

in astonishment and lifted her green eyes to meet the amused gaze of the Nightmare King.

LINE

He was still fighting off the self-loathing brought on by their admission of not seeing him when Pitch's mirthful gaze lifted up to him. It did nothing to help him stave off the painful voice in his head. _'They can't see you; they'll never see you. You're invisible, Jackson, it's like you don't even exist.'_

The shot caught him off guard, pulling him out of the depression he was falling into. In the pregnant pause that followed the arrow, Jack could sense the pending attack crossing the expression on the shade's face just before they both jumped into motion.

Pitch's wave of sand didn't even make it past the edge of Jack's branch as he vaulted himself in front of it and shot a wall of ice as a shield. Carefully noting the placement of the humans behind him, winter's child angled a flurry of icy shards toward the shadow wielder in hopes of blinding him. It did not work as he had hoped, but had rather given the shade the time to snap his fingers, calling his hoard into the battle.

Before the humans could even gasp in surprise, Jack danced around his wall of ice and shifted it until it completely surrounded those he was protecting, dragon included though he hope the Night Fury didn't melt the shield before he could fight back. He was given no more time to worry as all of the nightmares sent after the humans were now converging onto him. Pitch only laughed as he watched the winter sprite defend himself again the never-ending torrent of horses that clawed and ripped at his ever-moving form.

Much to the shade's astonishment, however, the boy wasn't overtaken despite being completely swarmed. He gracefully dodge around each attack, ignoring those that landed, and sent off countless bursts of snow and ice strong enough to freeze his attackers giving him the time to shatter them until they were melting into the ground. Lifting slightly higher in the air, Jack continued to focus his abilities until he was in the middle of the horde.

With only a slight intake of breath to warn them, the child grasped his staff with both hands. A loud shout escaped his pale lips as shockwaves of ice tore out of his center decimating every nightmare for miles. Even Pitch was forced to fade into the shadows to protect himself from the pure power that radiated from the boy. Just as suddenly as it had begun, it ended as the last of the horses were shattered.

Jack breathlessly crumpled to the ground.

LINE

No one said a word.

The ice dome that surrounded them shattered with the last huge wave of ice that had taken out every shadow within the clearing.

Pitch was gone along with all of the horses that had almost torn them to shreds, but none of them had any idea how.

It was as if the weather had a mind of its own.

A winter wasteland greeted them as they stepped off of the lush, green grass that had been protected with them inside the dome. The temperature of the slightly breezy spring day had fallen drastically, but they didn't shiver; minds too clouded to notice they were cold.

Toothless did not follow their aimless wandering about the clearing to search for answers, but instead cautiously moved to the center of the desolate snow, sniffing at an oddly dented pile. A curious gust of wind moved over the group before it circled the dragon's pile of snow as if leading the teens to investigate.

They didn't argue.

"W-What is it, bud?" Hiccup asked when his dragon stopped him from taking another step towards the mound of snow they surrounded.

The Night Fury could only warble imploringly at his rider, not understanding that the humans could not see the unconscious sprite. Heedless to their confusion, Toothless began to nudge the snow.

To the teens' amazement, however, it wasn't the snow the dragon was touching, but something on top of it. They blinked in completed bewilderment as that something seemed to shift on its own; the disturbed snow being the only way they could tell.

"My mother told me of a legend, his name was Winter," Rapunzel remembered. "She told me how he could control snow and blizzards; that he was evil and enjoyed the horrors he brought with him, but it was ice that shattered the rope that mother tied me with when I got away."

"My da' always told me stories of Old Man Winter, but ah never believed 'im. He said tha' 'e hated everything, but ah saw frost in Mor'du's fur when fightin' 'im," Merida gasped.

Hiccup tilted his head slightly. "After the battle with the Red Death, Gobber told me they found shards of ice in my hair. He believed that Jokul Frosti was watching out for me that day. It didn't make sense to me because there are stories of him leading children into the forest to die, casting ships onto ice burgs, and freezing crops to starve villages."

As if in response to their epiphanies, Toothless grunted and shook his head violently as if trying to get something out of his nose. Trying to make the humans understand, he nudged the snow again and warbled sadly.

"If all of the legends and stories are trueâ€¦|"

The thought was cut off with a sharp gasp as the figure of a young boy began to appear before them. Short, messy hair the color of the purest snow lay atop a child-like face relaxed in sleep. He wore a strange-looking, brown cloak over a white, long-sleeve shirt, and brown, deer-skin pants ripped off just below his knees, tied with leather cords. His feet were bare though somehow not even slightly colored in response to the intense chill in the air.

Countless gashed and bruises marred the motionless boy and the obvious fact that his chest was still as stone worried the teens greatly. He lay, unresponsive in the large snow pile, his skin pale as if he was already dead. That notion was forgotten as the boy's fingers twitched before he shifted with a small groan, though he still didn't wake.

Hiccup finished Rapunzel's words with the wonderings of his own mind. "â€|why would he do so much to protect us? How can someone evil be that selfless?"

"Maybe 'e jus' had a grudge against Pitch." It was phrased as more of a question, but it remained unanswered.

A short time passed before the snow around them slowly began to melt with the slightly rising spring temperature and the falling sun's lights casting about the clearing. Again, the boy shifted uncomfortably; no doubt still sore from the fight.

"What do we do?" Rapunzel asked after a time of silence. "We can't leave him after all he's done for us."

"Nah, we have ta' do somthin'. If we leave 'im here Pitch might come back for 'im."

Hiccup nodded, "You're right. We have to help him at least until he wakes up."

Toothless didn't need telling twice as he curled around the unmoving child and laid down to rest.

The teens followed suit and remade the campfire that had gone out in all of the excitement with a little help from the dragon who had to be convinced to blow fire onto the stack, though he did wisely get up and shift the pile of wood further from the boy of ice.

It took some time, but eventually, the fire was able to warm them up a bit. As night began to set in, Hiccup took Toothless out to spend some energy as well as gather blankets and warmer clothes for their stay while the girls remained watchful over the small boy.

Once Hiccup returned and they donned themselves in what warmer clothes the Viking could find, they began the long wait for the sprite to wake up. It was no surprise that they ended up sprawled out around the fire as eyes grew heavy.

Morning came, the bright sun waking the teens instantly, but they were worried to see the strange boy still passed out. After Hiccup and Toothless retrieved breakfast, they settled in for another day of waiting.

They banked his age at about 10 going by his size and appearance. It shocked them slightly to consider him so much younger in comparison as they had discussed their own ages earlier; Hiccup being almost 18, Rapunzel having just turned, and 16 Merida being 15. Of course, they had no doubt he was older than he looked. He had to be to contain as much power as he had shown in the fight with Pitch. Though it made them slightly weary as they had all been raised on stories depicting this very spirit as being as cold and cruel as the ice he

created.

The conversation had inevitably branched off into the many other legends they had been told. Each one, of course, had been told differently in association with the ranging cultures they had originated from. Their comparisons went fairly late into the day when it was cut off by the sound of the boy beginning to wake.

End
file.